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FROM: CANBERRA

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 315, OCTOBER 23

PRIORITY

DEPARTMENT PASS USIA.

FOLLOWING IS -STATEMENT ON PRESIDENT'S BROADCAST REGARDING CUBA
MADE BY PRIME MINISTER MENZIES ON FLOOR OF PARLIAMENT AFTERNOON,
OCTOBER 23, 1962:

QUOTE

HONOURABLE MEMBERS WILL BE AWARE OF PRESIDENT KENNEDY'S BROAD-
CAST IN RELATION TO CUBA.

IT IS A DECLARATION OF HISTORIC IMPORTANCE. HE HAS DEMONSTRATED
THAT OFFENSIVE NUCLEAR WEAPONS ARE BEING INSTALLED BY THE SOVIET
UNION IN CUBA AND THAT THE AMERICAS ARE THEREFORE BEING SUBMITTED
TO A VERY GRAVE THREAT, AT CLOSE QUARTERS.

THE PRESIDENT HAS DEMONSTRATED THE DECEIT PRACTISED BY THE SOVIET
UNION, AND ITS DETERMINATION BY THREAT OF AGGRESSION TO TERRORISE
NATIONS WHOSE ONLY WISH IS FOR PEACE.

WE COMMEND THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT. THOUGH INEVITABLY DRAMATIC,
IT WAS IN ESSENCE DEFENSIVE. WE APPRECIATE HIS REFERENCE TO THE
VITAL IMPORTANCE OF REGIONAL DEFENSIVE AGREEMENTS -- AGREEMENTS,
WHICH ARE AUTHORISED BY THE UNITED NATIONS CHARTER AND WHICH ARE
NECESSARY FOR THE COMMON SAFETY OF THOSE LIVING WITHIN THE REGION.
WE WELCOME THE READINESS OF THE USA TO BRING THE MATTER PROMPTLY
BEFORE THE UNITED NATIONS.

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-2- 315, OCTOBER 23 FROM CANBERRA

BOTH IN HIS BROADCAST AND IN A PERSONAL COMMUNICATION TO ME THIS MORNING, THE PRESIDENT HAS INDICATED THAT HE IS REQUESTING AN URGENT MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL AT WHICH THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR WOULD PRESENT, ON BEHALF OF THE UNITED STATES, A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF MISSILE BASES AND OTHER OFFENSIVE WEAPONS IN CUBA UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF UNITED NATIONS OBSERVERS. WE HAVE INSTRUCTED OUR OWN AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS TO DO ALL IN HIS POWER TO SUPPORT THE PASSING OF THIS RESOLUTION.

WE DO NOT UNDER-ESTIMATE THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION, A GRAVITY PROFOUNDLY DEMONSTRATED BY BOTH THE TONE AND SUBSTANCE OF THE PRESIDENT'S BROADCAST. WE HOPE THAT HIS STATEMENT AND THE STEPS TO BE TAKEN PURSUANT TO IT WILL BRING HOME TO THE SOVIET UNION THE NATURE OF THE CONSEQUENCES WHICH MAY FLOW FROM ITS OVERSEAS POLICIES. INDEED THE WHOLE MATTER WILL SERVE TO TEST WHETHER THE SOVIET UNION'S CONSTANT ADVOCACY OF PEACE POSSESSES EITHER SINCERITY OR SUBSTANCE.

UNQUOTE

OPPOSITION LEADER CALWELL MADE STATEMENT IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING PM'S STATEMENT. HE EXPLAINED HE HAD NOT YET RECEIVED TEXT PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENT. THROUGHOUT REMARKS HE EMPHASIZED PEACE THEME AND EXPRESSED FERVANT HOPE THAT PRESENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CUBA WOULD NOT LEAD TO WAR: HE SAID HIS PARTY WAS OPPOSED TO EXTENSION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AT ANY TIME IN CUBA OR ANYWHERE ELSE. CALWELL GAVE NO INDICATION WHETHER HE SUPPORTED US ACTIONS; MADE NO REFERENCE TO ACTION BEING TAKEN BY QS IN UN.

TEXT CALWELL STATEMENT TO FOLLOW WHEN AVAILABLE.

BATTLE

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Advance copy S/So and USIA 10/23/62 CWO-JRL

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